



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

WESTERN REGION

450 GOLDEN GATE AVENUE, BOX 36063
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102

IN REPLY REFER TO:

H4217(WR-RH)

June 15, 1987

Mrs. Edward F. Peterson
2936 South West Street
Visalia, California 93277

Dear Mrs. Peterson:

Last September Mrs. Kathryn Gualtieri, the California State Historic Preservation Officer, sent us your letter of August 12, 1986, and although it was received here on September 16, it somehow went astray and did not reach proper staff until April 1987.

In response to your fears for the future of potentially historic cabins in the Mineral King addition to Sequoia National Park, the National Park Service has a process by which all buildings and structures which are to be removed or demolished must first be the subject of a "Report of Survey" then goes to the Western Regional Office where it is reviewed by the Regional Historian and the Regional Historical Architect, and if the buildings or structures described in the report appear to have any historical importance, they recommend that the Report of Survey be disapproved. Normally, buildings and structures have to be more than 50 years of age to qualify as having historical significance, but the very fact that they are more than 50 years of age does not alone mean that they do have significance. They must have other qualities of importance that make them truly significant in history or architectural history. As a further check to insure that historic buildings are not inadvertently destroyed reports of Survey for buildings more than 50 years of age must go to our Washington, D.C. offices, where they are reviewed by the Chief Historian and Chief Historical Architect, who must give permission for their removal.

Thus the National Park Service has a process in place by which all buildings and structures are reviewed for their historical and architectural significance before they can be demolished. This does not necessarily guarantee preservation. If there is no money available, if preservation is too costly, if there are other conditions which make demolition desirable, there is a

further legal process through which the National Park Service must proceed, which includes review and comment by the California State Historic Preservation Office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation in accordance with federal laws and regulations.

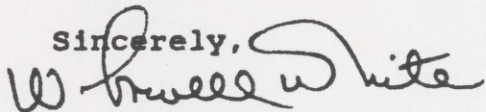
Please be assured that we intend to make every effort to identify historically and architecturally and archaeologically significant resources in Mineral King before any action will be taken which will affect them. District Ranger William Tweed, who has a PhD. in history, carried out a preliminary reconnaissance of Mineral King in 1979 which identified the Kaweah Han Estate and several other resources as having potential significance, but was unable to do a thorough study. In 1982, a Historic Resource Study was requested for Mineral King, however, funding for the studies are limited to one new study a year. We anticipate that it will be a number of years before the study is undertaken.

We note from your letter that some members of the "Mineral King Historical Preservation Society" may have done some research on Mineral King which would be of assistance to us when we do obtain funds to undertake a historic resources study. We would appreciate it if we could obtain xerox copies of that research, as it would probably help us in eventually preparing a historic resources study of Mineral King, and save us some duplication of effort. We have, of course, Samuel Porter's thesis, "The Silver Rush at Mineral King, California, 1873-1882," but we have little information on the history of Mineral King after 1882.

Of course the question of historical significance has no bearing on the question of occupancy of cabins at Mineral King, or on compliance with the provisions of Public Law 95-625, to which you refer. The question of historical and architectural significance is a question which the National Park Service must deal with by law before removing any government-owned structures, so the cabins are not endangered merely by Public Law 95-625. If they are not historically or architecturally significant, it is likely that those which come into government ownership eventually will be removed. If they are historically or architecturally significant, it is likely that those which have significance which come into government ownership will be preserved, but the National Park Service will have to go through the process of ascertaining potential significance before removing any structures.

Enclosed is a booklet, National Register of Historic Places
Bulletin No. 16, which describes that process which we will be
following.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "W. Lowell White". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "W." being a large, stylized initial, followed by "Lowell" and "White".

W. Lowell White
Acting Regional Director, Western Region

Enclosure